

Clifton Water and Improvement Company Building
Clifton Townsite
Park Avenue and Fraser Street
Clifton
Greenlee County
Arizona

HABS No. AZ-184

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Western Region
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94107

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CLIFTON WATER AND IMPROVEMENT COMPANY BUILDING

HABS No. AZ-184

Location:

Clifton Townsite, Park Avenue and Fraser Street, Clifton, Greenlee County, Arizona

Significance:

Associated with commerce in Clifton and the development of Clifton.

Description:

This commercial building is one of several in a strip of commercial properties on Park Avenue. Typical of many of Clifton's commercial buildings, it is of the Victorian period Commercial style. The single story brick building originally had a flat roof with parapets. A sloped roof has been added over the original roof. The front parapet has a corbelled cornice with brick dentils. The entrance is a single wood frame door with a transom above. One double-hung window appears at the facade, which has a modern aluminum awning above it. A small shed-roofed early addition has been constructed in the rear.

History:

This one story brick building was constructed ca. 1907 to house the offices of the Clifton Water and Improvement Company. A small office was constructed first which served as a location for residents to pay their water bills. In 1912 the Clifton Water and Improvement Company added a workshop at the rear of the building. Known as the "pipe shop," this extension to the original building housed tools, pipes, and other materials needed for maintenance of the water system.¹

A group of Morenci businessmen incorporated the Clifton Water and Improvement Company on April 12, 1902. These included W.J. Davis, Gordon McLean, M.E. Thorpe, and H.B. Rice. Clifton resident A.G. Smith was the only incorporator living outside Morenci. Gordon McLean served as President of the Company, with Davis as Vice-President and Smith as Secretary-Treasurer. The company existed to provide water service to private lands and subdivisions in Clifton. Residents and businesses on A.C. Company owned lands received their water from the Copper Company. The Clifton Water and Improvement Company was re-organized in 1916 when Henry Hill took over as President and again in 1926 when Charles S. Beck assumed the position of Superintendent. Its directors voluntarily dissolved the corporation in 1942 when it was acquired by the Morenci Water and Electric Co.²

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Sources (endnotes):

1. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps: 1904, 1908, 1914, 1931; 1921 Arizona Copper Company base map; Arizona Corporation Commission "dead files" at the Arizona State Department of Library, Archives and Public Records, Phoenix.
2. Arizona Corporation Commission "dead files," on file at the Arizona Department of Library, Archives and Public Records, Phoenix; Copper Era June 13, 1919 (I, 3:3).

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